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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001701

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/07/2014

TAGS: PREL NL EUN

SUBJECT: EU FM'S TO DISCUSS SUDAN, MEET ALLAWI, AND PONDER  
BURMA AT JULY 12-13 GAERC

REF: STATE 147536 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Andrew Schofer, Political Counselor, for reasons 1.4 (B)  
and (D)

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¶11. (C) SUMMARY: The Dutch expect next steps in Iraq and Sudan to dominate discussion at the July 12 ) 13 General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), according to Joep Wijnands, Deputy Director of the Dutch MFA's Department of Political Affairs and the Dutch European Correspondent, who met Poloff to discuss Reftel points on July 7. The GAERC agenda will also include setting up procedures for dealing with Burma in the context of October's ASEM Summit; drafting supporting language for President Karzai in the run up to elections in Afghanistan; and reviewing circumstances in the Balkans, including the handover from SFOR to EUFOR. Wijnands did not list the China Arms Embargo as a GAERC topic and listened attentively to a strong reiteration of U.S. human rights and security concerns. Neither Helms Burton nor Venezuela will be on the GAERC Agenda. END SUMMARY.

IRAQ

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¶12. (C) Iraqi PM Allawi has decided to attend a lunch during the GAERC, despite concerns about his security. Wijnands said that Allawi had been assured that he would be adequately protected by extant security in Brussels. Wijnands noted that the Dutch Embassy in Baghdad will represent the EU during the Dutch Presidency, but he could not say if the EC would soon open an office there.

SUDAN

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¶13. (SBU) While acknowledging the EU's financial contributions in Sudan to date, Wijnands bemoaned in general the EU response in Sudan. He expects the GAERC will seek agreement on a more coordinated, forceful EU role there.

BURMA

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¶14. (C) Meetings with Asia will take up much of the Dutch Presidency. The Asia-EU (ASEM) Summit is still scheduled for October 8-9 in Hanoi, but Burma's intransigence on reform continues to threaten this meeting. Strong pressure from the EU and other Asian partners will continue, Wijnands promised, since the EU is committed to the Summit -- but "not at any cost." The GAERC will discuss procedural details for maneuvering Burma to the table. They will appoint Hans van der Broek to replace Ireland's John Campbell as Special Envoy of the Presidency to work the issue in EU and Asian capitals. Informal options floated by the EU and Asians (Jakarta and Hanoi) range from allowing Burma to participate in the summit at a very low level to canceling the summit altogether. Wijnands reported the British remain most firm on excluding an unreformed Burma, with Germany and France more determined to have the Summit proceed even if serious problems remain in Burma. The Asian bottom line remains opaque.

AFGHANISTAN

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¶15. (C) The EU would prefer simultaneous elections for President and Parliament to show determination in the face of Taliban and warlord threats. Wijnands said, however, that the EU suspects President Karzai will ultimately decide to hold them separately. Anticipating this decision, Wijnands expects the GAERC to draft a note expressing "support for the process" and "respect for Karzai's decision." Wijnands expects the EU to send a "monitoring and election support team" into eight Afghan cities; security concerns, however, will likely prevent sending a full-fledged EU observer mission that could cover the whole country.

BALKANS

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¶16. (SBU) Wijnands had no specifics on what would be discussed regarding the Balkans, other than to say that the handover from SFOR to EUFOR should proceed smoothly since the make up

of the forces will essentially remain the same.

HELMS BURTON AND VENEZUELA

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17. (SBU) Wijnands did not expect Helms-Burton or Venezuela to come up on the GAERC agenda. He had no information on the issues and promised to pass our points on.

18. (C) In a separate meeting, Dutch Cuba Desk Officer Jan Jaap Groenemeijer told Poloff that Member State reps at the July 5 EU Latin American Working Party Meeting expressed broad discontent with the new U.S. approach to collecting information about countries' policies and activities in Cuba, which in their collective view could only foreshadow a country-by-country approach to Libertad Act Title III waivers "even though the U.S. has denied it." EU member state dissatisfaction appears to stem primarily from fear that member states will be treated differently despite the common EU position toward Cuba. Groenemeijer said the issue would be raised at the July 13 U.S.-EU Political Directors' Meeting.

19. (C) Also on July 7, Dutch MFA South America Desk Officer Dmitri Vogelaar told Poloff that Chris Patten would make a decision this week on whether to send EU observers to the August 14 recall referendum in Venezuela. He said the decision would be based on continuing negotiations with the Venezuelan Electoral Council about lifting restrictions on the observers, and on obtaining a Venezuelan security guarantee for observers. Vogelaar believed that the EU was about as likely to send observers as the OAS, assuming that both organizations are undertaking similar negotiations regarding security and observer restrictions. Analysis of EU assistance for an OAS mission absent an EU mission, he said, would be premature. Vogelaar believed that in the case of a positive decision, long-term election observers would be sent on July 15 and short-term observers on or about August 10.

SOBEL